DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 188 SP 026 718

AUTHOR Swanson-Owens, Deborah
TITLE Identifying Natural Sources of Resistance: A Case Study Analysis of Curriculum Implementation.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 50p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (69th, Chicago, IL, March 31-April 4, 1985).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adoption (Ideas); *Program Implementation; Secondary Education; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Response; Theory Practice Relationship

ABSTRACT

Frequently curriculum implementation procedures consist of little more than teachers receiving descriptions of subject matter, definitions of new or technical terminology, and/or outlines detailing the surface steps of an instructional process. This case study analysis of how two high school teachers adapted some new curriculum features into their courses at the instigation and with the collaboration of the author suggests that efforts to promote this kind of sharing do not guarantee that teachers can or will adopt new curriculum. Those in a position to develop, implement, and evaluate curricula need to pay close attention to the circumstances through which innovations are introduced. They also need to maximize the opportunities for exchange between outsiders and practitioners as both attempt to develop and evaluate what curricular innovations mean in various classrooms. Rather than look at teachers as passive transmitters of information, and new curriculum as a thing ready to elicit a certain type of adoption behavior, curriculum planners and evaluators need to build instructional scaffolds that accommodate individual differences. It is important that training procedures and information take into account the in-place conceptual networks or meaning systems that filter teachers' evaluations of curriculum. Evaluators need to use procedures that will help them to begin to incorporate teachers' perspectives into their assessments of teachers' adoption behavior. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED264188

IDENTIFYING NATURAL SOURCES OF RESISTANCE:

A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Deborah Swanson-Owens

Paper to be presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, 1985.

SP 026 718

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D. Swanson-Owens

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Identifying Natural Sources of Resistance:
A Case Study Analysis of Curriculum Implementation

by
Deborah Swanson-Owens
Stanford University

Everybody now makes the same observation: in order for change to take place in schools, we have to understand the perspectives of the individuals involved. Outside change agents can not afford to overlook insider perspectives since school improvement—or educational change of any stripe—is a problem that turns on the incentives, attitudes, abilities and responses of those ultimately responsibile for seeing that improvement initiatives translate into improved educational services for students.

Those of us specifically engaged in curricular reform efforts have followed our own path to this piece of conventional wisdom. We know that change agents have often overestimated the fit between outsider and insider perspectives, a miscalculation which has doomed many reform efforts because they are implemented and evaluated according to timetables that overlook teachers' unsystematic and slow assimilation of the reform, because the changes they involve seem irrelevent to teachers, and because their costs outweigh their benefits for teachers (Fullan, 1982). We know that this miscalculation has also contributed to a distorted view of teachers' willingness or capacity to make changes (Corno, 1979), their contribution to changes (Olson,1980; Sarason, 1971), their role in the failure of certain changes to effect positive outcomes (Elbaz, 1981), and the cultural meaning they ascribe to change (Olson, 1980). We also know that such views have promoted efforts to make curricula more "teacher proof" and that such efforts are misguided since we do not put "theory <u>into</u> practice," but rather "into <u>practitioners</u>, where it may serve a wide variety of functions, only one of which is the actual guidance of their

actions" (Philip Jackson, cited in Clark and Yinger, 1980, p. 5). As a result of these and many other studies, we know that teachers are not passive transmitters of knowledge but rather active and adaptive agents who filter curricular innovations—like any other externally initiated reform—through complex meaning systems. In short, we know that the adoption of a new curriculum is conditioned by the degree of fit between the meaning systems of those initiating and those implementing it. If we are to be successful in implementing new curriculum, then, we must address the problem of teachers developing meaning in relation to that curriculum.[1]

Observations like these have become so commonplace that people assume that they have the force of an incantation: if we say it with enough conviction, it will happen. In many cases, however, the need to take into account teachers' perspectives has not gone beyond a truism. If we believe that outsider interpretations have underutilized or misunderstood insiders' meaning systems in their reform efforts, and accept that these distortions have minimized the impact of many reforms—curricular reforms among them—then what we need are empirical studies that explore the phenomenology of change,[2] studies that illustrate how teachers actually experience change as distinct from how outsiders might have intended or predicted that experience. Moreover, we need to begin to develop a technology that will enable outside change agents to identify and respond to these in-place meaning systems.

THIS STUDY

Purpose

This paper attempts to address both of these needs: it suggests an analytic tool to help us come closer to understanding why teachers respond to new curriculum the way they do; it also provides empirical evidence of

two high school teachers responding to a particular set of curricular innovations. The primary purpose of this report is to describe an analytic model I developed while working with these teachers. In order to illustrate how this kind of analytic model might be applied to a particular set of curricular goals and outcomes, I devote a sizable portion of my discussion to an analysis of my own case study data. Thus, in addition to the site-specific analyses it provides, this analytic model is presented with the hope that it can be of heuristic value to others as they attempt to explore what teachers risk, what they can accomodate, and what strategies they employ in their efforts to translate instructional theory into occasions of learning.

Background

As orginally conceived, this case study analysis had little to do with analytic methods which would allow outsiders to examine teachers' responses to curriculum. As a member of a research project interested in exploring the effects of writing on learning,[3] I spent five months in a local high school, collaboratively developing writing tasks with several teachers who had volunteered to work with the project. These teachers expressed a willingess to experiment with writing in their classes, and as part of our collaborative efforts, we attempted to promote each teacher's instructional goals, as well as frame assignments with a concern for the numerous demands already made on him or her. Collaboration between teacher and researcher was an important component in the study design since it was hoped that teacher input would narrow the gap between theory and practice, a gap that has often contributed to the limited success reported in other curriculum reform efforts (e.g., Fulwiler, 1984; Olson, 1981; Schwab, 1978).

In the course of describing the teachers' responses to our

3

collaborative efforts, however, I was repeatedly struck by what appeared to me to be a number of baffling and disappointing outcomes. From my perspective, tasks that were designed to encourage a range of individual responses ended up being assigned in ways that promoted a limited set of predetermined responses from the students. "Freewriting" assignments transformed into highly-structured short answer exercises. Prewriting activities turned into isolated events, into projects which contributed little if anything to students' final papers. In short, it appeared that these teachers further "domesticated" the writing tasks in ways that made them different from, and often incongruent with, the original assignments as I thought we had discussed them.

Assuming that these teachers felt their actions were congruent with my expectations,[4] and, assuming that these actions reflected their own rational and adaptive interpretations of our collaborative sessions, I realized that it was important for me to try and distinguish between my own perspective and those of the teachers. I realized it was not enough simply to ask why these teachers responded as they did—I needed to go a step further and ask why it was <u>appropriate</u> that they acted as they did. In other words, I realized that without this added qualifier, it would be easy to render explanations informed by only one set of ideas about schooling—my own. Moreover, I realized that such explanations would reflect an overly simplistic view of schooling and the process of change. Classrooms are not simply placid pools but rather complex environments maintained according to a delicate equilibrium of interests, expectations, and values. As a corrective to my potentially lop-sided or one-dimensional interpretation, then, I wanted to try and generate an account that would at least come closer to, or to approximate an insider's account of what

[4]

these curriculum innovations meant.

It is important not to confuse "closer to" with "identified with." I am not using the term "insider interpretation" as it is strictly defined by anthropologists since my analyses involve a synthesis of a great deal of observational and interview data, and any act of systhesis necessarily reflects decisions and inferences made by the researcher. Furthermore, my role in the setting was partly that of an evaluator, a stance an anthropologist would resist. I was at once a change agent and a student of change. Thus, I use the term "insider interpretation" to indicate my research goal. My approach is meant to function as a corrective, not necessarily a solution to the problem of evaluations which typically provide only one interpretation of teachers' behaviors.

In an attempt to move closer to this "insider's perspective," then, I developed and applied an analytic model which proved to be of use to me as an explanatory and as a predictive tool in this setting.

The Study Setting

This study was conducted in a high school located in an urban middle class community with a population of approximately 55, 000. Roughly 2,100 students attend the high school. The school has recently absorbed the teaching staff and student body of a nearby high school which was forced to close. As a consequence, the school now retains a staff of teachers who have taught, on the average, for 20 years. The merger also significantly altered the make-up of the student body, increasing the percentage of upper class, college-bound students as well as students who fall within a low to medium skill range. These increases have prompted several departments to develop a track of "accelerated" courses which will accomodate the needs of students who plan to go to college.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Data Sources

Teachers:

I worked with two of the teachers who volunteered to participate in the project. One was an English teacher who had been teaching part-time in the school district for 18 years. Having earned his bachelors degree in English from an East coast Ivy League university, Jack Graves (pseudonym) completed his credential courses at a nearby private university. Jack and I developed writing tasks for an accelerated freshman English course, a course he was teaching for the first time. He he said he preferred to work with freshmen rather than with upper classmen since with freshmen "there's still hope." Jack felt that his "accelerated" group of students would be considered "average" in other school districts. Prior to this year, he had taught advanced English classes and worked in the reading center at the school.

I also worked with a home economics teacher, Naomi Watson. Naomi wanted us to work on writing tasks for her Survival Skills class. The class, an elective offered through the home economics department, was designed for seniors who did not plan to go on to college.

At the time of this study, Naomi had been teaching for 23 years. She said she considered teaching her own means of survival: confronted with the picture of a newly-widowed sister who was unprepared to survive on her own, Naomi decided 23 years ago that she would not find herself likewise unprepared and so began to work. She wanted her students to adopt the perspective she developed years ago.

Naomi's class focused on the practical knowledge she thought students would need when they looked for work and moved away from home. She thus devoted much of the class time discussing topics she deemed relevant to such enterprises (e.g., how to fill out job applications, look for apartments, seek legal counsel, pay taxes).

Artifacts:

For each class, I collected the following sets of writing:

(1) A writing assignment given at the beginning, middle and end of the school year.
(2) All writing-to-learn tasks given as a result of my collaborative work with the teacher.
(3) Any assignment that seems "interesing" for one reason or another—these might include "unusual" assignments given by the teacher, or those deemed particularly successful or problematic by the teacher.
(4) All "writing" (defined as 3 or more connected sentences) done by several case study students in all of their other classes.

Other artifacts include:

(1) various materials used by teachers in planning their lessons
(2) the English department curriculum guidelines
(3) the teacher's comments on student papers
(4) worksheets used by students on the days I observed the classes
(5) any written correspondence between the teacher and myself (e.g., for a while the teachers were keeping a journal)

Data Collection Strategies

For five months, I met weekly with each teacher. Meetings were usually conducted during the teacher's prep period and thus ran about 40 minutes in length. In general, these meetings covered: (1) the teacher's goals for the next unit in the class, (2) the assignments he or she planned to give for that unit, (3) the class activities he or she intended to use relative to that unit, and (4) follow-up evaluations of a given assignment and class activities. During these meetings I also probed for the types of "practical knowledge"[5] used by the teacher in his or her plans for, and assessments of the class.

Throughout these five months, I made weekly visits to each class. The

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

number and occasion for these visits varied according to the class activities. In addition to observing all of the collaboratively developed writing tasks, I observed a variety of lessons so that I might develop a sense of each teacher's instructional style and routines.

All interviews and class sessions were tape recorded. Verbatim transcripts were made of most of the interview talk; (meeting logistics, conversational redundancies, and digressions having no clear reference to the teachers' personal, school, or classroom life, were only summarized). In all, these interview tapes produced almost 100 pages of text.

Lesson tapes were used to supplement field note data. Verbatim transcripts were made of all teacher provided instructions for the collaboratively developed writing assignments.

The interview transcripts served as the primary data souce for this analysis. All other data sources and artifacts were used as a means of testing my interpretations. One additional source—a second researcher assigned to these teachers—also served as a basis of triangulation. This researcher was present in all of the classes I observed, and in many of the interviews. He was also provided with all interview transcripts.

Data Analyses

Based on the information yielded by my initial analytic framework, (see Methodgological Appendix), I developed a set of higher order analytic categories so that I might be able to synthesize the data in terms of a single theoretical construct. I have identified this construct as a single "system of meaning." This system incorporates all of my higher-order analytic categories—materials/activities, teacher, knowledge, and students. Because these analytic categories could account for virtually all of the substantive transcript and field note data, the meaning systems

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

they define are systems fashioned from an extensive data base. In order to distinguish between these meaning systems any one of a number of others operating in this study setting, I have identified them as "curricular systems of meaning."[6]

Having identified these categories as members of a single system, it seemed appropriate to develop a system model that would identify these categories as both discrete and as interactive components of the system. (See Figure 1.) The four categories were thus incorporated into an analytic grid which is set up as a matrix: the principal diagonal provides information about the four categories as discrete elements of the system; the other cells provide information about their interactions.

In the final phase of the analysis, this model was used to identify two criteria—locus of attention and conditions of instruction—which I believe help measure the degree of fit between two meaning systems. In the following discussion, I identify these criteria or measures of fit as "natural sources of resistance." However, since the term "resistance" is symptomatic of precisely the problem that this analysis attempts to address, some clarification is in order.

As it is typically used, the word "resistance" belies an outsider's attempts to describe an insider's response to change. More importantly, it reflects a perspective that views teachers' responses negatively, a perspective that views these responses as reactions against, rather than as commitments to proposed changes.

In my attempts to explain these teachers' responses, I use the phrase "natural sources of resistance" to suggest that these outcomes identify <u>appropriate discrepancies</u> given the presence of particular mismatches between outsider and insider meaning systems. Indeed, teachers' responses seem "resistant" to the extent that they violate outsider's expectations;

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

	knowledge	materials/ activities	teacher	students
knowledge	What is knowledge? What do the teachers want the students to learn?			
materials/ activities	How do the materials/ activities contribute to learning?	What are the materials? What are the activities?		
teacher	What does the teacher know about the subject matter?	What does the teacher do with materials (e.g., how does he/she set up, carry out, evaluate activities)?	What is the role of a teacher? *self-image *professional image	
students	What do students know in general? about the subject matter? How do they respond to information?	How do students interact with the materials? What can they handle? How do they cope?	What is the relationship between the teacher and the students? *social *academic	Who are the students? *attitudes *qualities *characteristics *interests

Figure 1. Model of a Curricular System of Meaning.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAIL

at the same time, they are "natural" or appropriate if one assumes that they reflect teachers' commitments to effective practice as they know it.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Both Jack and Naomi selected, carried out, and evaluated their curriculum according to complex meaning systems. As it is described here, one of these systems integrates teacher's conceptions of knowledge, materials/activities, teacher, and students. Although distinct, none of these four concerns can be fulled developed in isolation since each is conditioned to some extent by one or more of the others: teachers' roles are conditioned by the subject matter and students they have; knowledge is defined by the subject matter of the course; students are identified by the way they respond to teachers and subject matter. Thus, each of these concerns is itself complex since it may involve multiple goals, purposes, and strategies. Collectively, they constitute an even more complex network of concerns which would appear to influence a teacher's assessment of curriculum content and instructional strategies.

What, then, can an analytic model such as the one proposed in this study tell us about teachers' efforts to assimilate and accommodate to new curriculum? How might an outsider use such a model to explain the apparent "failure" of these attempts in terms of this system? That is, if we assume that such failures reflect some kind of mismatch between outsider and insider meaning systems, how can this analytic model be used to measure the fit between a teacher and an evaluator?

One obvious starting point would be to examine individuals' respective definitions of each of the four system components. This is not a particularly telling comparison, however, since such definitions are generally quite abstract—representing the ideal rather than the real, or the "appropriate" rather than the actual meanings each person attaches to terms such as "knowledge," "materials," "teachers," and "students." For instance, Jack and I agree that the highest form of "understanding" leads

to changes within the individual, that decoding is necessary when materials are too difficult for students to handle on their own, that writing is a tool for survival and a means for self-expression. Naomi and I want students to think on their own, believe that not all knowledge must be remembered, and consider writing to be a way to learn as well as a method for holding students' attention and organizing their thoughts. (Subject matter was not a potential source of conflict between teacher and researcher since the teacher specified the subject matter, materials, and instructional goals around which the writing-to-learn tasks were designed.)

Despite these agreements, I found myself wondering why Jack relied so little on writing to promote learning in his class, why Naomi was more interested in the amount of writing than in its content, and why both presented "freewrites" as fairly structured assignments despite discussions that would, from my perspective, discourage such action.

Thus, while definitions of instructional goals, materials, and strategies help to characterize an individual's curricular system, these definitions provide little insight into why a particular system appears to resist change. Rather than compare these systems at this level of generalization then, it seems more instructive to look at the balances that maintain, and at the notions that underly these systems. Put another way, it seems instructive to identify a teacher's responses according to the way his or her meaning system functions, not simply the way he or she defines each of its components.

As a way of exploring how these meaning systems function, then, two factors—locus of attention and conditions of practice—will be discussed below. Both reflect concerns that are crucial to the effective and efficient working of a system; for this reason, both illuminate conditions

of fit, or natural sources of resistance to change.

Locus of Attention

Locus of attention refers to a critical focal point within a system of meaning. Moreover, according to the analysis yielded by the system structure presented in this study, this locus of attention represents a critical point of balance which influences a number of curricular decisions as individuals attempt to maintain the stabilily of the system. As such, it specifies a part of the system that is sensitive to changes that might threaten the stability and successful functioning of the system. The argument here is that an individual's locus of attention offers one way to examine the fit between outsiders' and insiders' responses to change.

One of the ways locus of attention can help to explain apparent modifications or outright resistance to new curriculum is that each individual's center of interest functions as a screen through which he or she filters and thus evaluates the terminology, materials, and procedures associated with the new curriculum. The fact that these filters differ helps to explain why a common vocabulary or shared instructional goals were not strong predictors of "success" as I defined it. Such discrepancies are evident in the accounts that follow.

Jack

In one planning session Jack and I agreed that the students might benefit from doing a series of short, unstructured writings which would allow them to do some "brainstorming" for their final paper on Romeo and Juliet. In the formal paper, Jack wanted them to write about the alternatives Juliet has at the end of the play and her motivation for choosing to die rather than live. The first of the preliminary "brainstorming" or "freewriting" pieces would ask students to reflect on a personal experience, a difficult decision they had to make. In the next

one or two freewrites (the number depended the teacher's division of the tasks), students were to take a portion of the play (again to be specified by the teacher), translate it into their own words, and discuss the behavior of, and alternatives available to a character in that scene. All of the freewrites were to take no more than ten minutes of class time, and were going to be read but not marked by Jack. At the end of the planning session we discussed ways he might take the information generated by the freewrites back into the class, as well as ways he might make explicit the connection(s) between each successive piece they wrote.

From this discussion, I assumed that students would do between two and four preliminary writings, that the relationship between these writings would be explicitly stated by Jack, and that by the time students started their final paper, they would have had occasions to write about conflict, choice, and motivation.

Something different happened. Jack did ask the students to discuss a difficult personal decision. However, most students ran out of time before they could begin to analyze their alternatives or motives. Although Jack said he was impressed by the length of their freewrites and wished more students had analyzed their decision, he concluded he could not afford to spend more time on this assignment. The time he had available to spend on the play was used for readings and class discussions of the play. (How these readings and discussions were conducted will be developed in a subsequent description of Jack's class.)

Students did not do any more work on this or any other freewriting task. On the day before they were to begin their formal paper on Romeo and Juliet, Jack had them work in groups to generate a list of Juliet's alternatives and when he found most students had trouble coming up with

their own suggestions, he held an eleven minute class "discussion" (his term) during which he did most of the talking. By the end of the discussion, he had given the class a topic sentence for their paper and a number of alternatives they could discuss.

Our collaborative efforts and their classroom consequences followed a similar pattern when Jack taught Great Expectations. Students were to do a series of short, unstructured writings to get them to develop their thinking about a topic which would be addressed in their formal paper. Once again, these preliminary assignments were designed to move students from a personal analysis to a text-based analysis of a topic. In our planning session, Jack and I again discussed how each successive writing could build on the concepts, the insights generated in the prior writings.

Jack said he liked the idea of having them do a series of preliminary writings rather than the typical "one shot" writing assignments. He also said he found that the students were engaged by the process as indicated by the amount of information expressed in, and the "genuine voice" that came through the writing. Despite these observations, Jack admitted did not see the series of writings as a continuum, a position made manifest by the fact that he made few explicit connections between the freewrites and the final assignment.

Jack's different way of using these preliminary writings—and thus his apparent resistance to the curriculum as I thought we had discussed it—makes sense when our collaborative efforts are interpreted through our different points of critical concern.

As an outsider interested in using writing to develop knowledge, my attention centered on the relationship between knowledge and activities. More specifically, I was concerned with the relationship between old and new knowledge, a point of critical interest since my suggestions were based

upon the position that learning is an interactive process. This position is drawn, in part, from the constructivist view of language comprehension (e,g., Spiro, 1980), which holds that meaning derives from the interaction between text (new information) and context (characterized by a variety of factors such as one's language skills, prior knowledge, and attitude towards the task). My work with these teachers was predicated on the belief that writing promotes this interactive process, that it encourages students to relate actively rather than passively with topics of study. In the act of writing, students draw upon prior knowledge, sort through concepts, and integrate information into existing knowledge structures as they attempt to formulate a coherent statement about a topic. By writing, then, students develop thinking skills which promote comphrehension and thus knowledge of the subject matter. Within my system, "success" is thus defined by the extent to which writing contributes to this higher level of understanding.

By contrast, Jack's definition of success, and thus his locus of attention, seems to be very much conditioned by his belief that meaning resides in the text. To focus on the students' prior knowledge was to encourage the journey into oneself, a journey that Jack believed should take place only <u>after</u> students had developed an understanding of the text. For Jack, it is this understanding of new information that makes the journey in worthwhile. Given this orientation, Jack focuses most of his attention on the relationship between teacher and course materials.

The role Jack plays in the development of this understanding is important since he believes students have trouble understanding literature for a number of reasons. Underlying all of these problems is the fact that "most literature was not written for kids," nor "written to be studied." As a result, students struggle to comprehend texts that address questions

they have not yet asked, problems they have not yet encountered, experiences they have not yet imagined. Furthermore, this material is packaged in ways that make its messages difficult to grasp. Jack describes these packages in terms of "alien styles" (usually referring to the unfamiliar syntax of a text) and "sophisticated vocabulary" which the students usually lack. The very substance of Jack's curriculum is thus a source of tension for him: what he needs to teach is not meant to be taught, especially to this age group.

Students also have problems understanding literature because a fundamental disparity exists between the values represented in the literature and those currently held in society. According to Jack, "literature often addresses itself to moral or spiritual considerations, whereas the present age is marked by materialism and expediency." Jack is more than a carrier of culture then—he is its translator, interpreting values as alien to his students as the syntax which expresses them. Here a second tension arises for Jack since he feels he must select materials that are part of the students' cultural heritage (though at times foreign to their current meaning systems), while at the same time he must select materials that promise to "speak to some situation they're likely to know something about."

Students also experience difficulty because they are generally "too self-involved," an attitude that causes them "to pick up only those ideas they're particularly interested in as opposed to what the author's trying to say."

In an effort to address these three problems, then, Jack must negotiate among a number of conflicting concerns: the value of a piece of literature versus its inaccessibility, the traditional versus the current moral codes by which the text is interpreted and self-reflection possible,

and the need to encourage student interest versus the need to have them travel beyond that interest to discover the author's meaning.

To help students accomodate to the meaning in literature, Jack spends a great deal of time and effort decoding a text. He generally begins a book or play with a brief lecture to set the piece in an historical and literary context. He reads the text orally, believing that "if it's read properly, they can understand what's going on." During these oral readings, he often pauses to define a word not already included in their weekly vocabulary list. After these readings, he occassionally holds class discussions in which he develops and instantiates a general theme in the piece. He then follows these discussions with a formal essay, organized around a topic he selects and believes will encourage them to view the literature in ways that would not naturally occur to them.

Jack realizes he is doing much of the "work" to get students through a piece of literature. On one hand, he believes this sustained effort is necessary for the students to comprehend a text like Great Expectations. On the other hand, he realizes that his students often add little to his interpretation when they write about the piece. These two concerns—the need to decode the text and maintain student interest—do not conflict with one another in Jack's ideal teaching environment. His advanced classes provide such an environment, for these students "do not rely on interest to carry them through" their readings.

As Jack moves to a lower track of student however, he faces an increasing pull in two opposing directions. He knows from their oral reading and responses to questions that these students will not learn unless they are helped through a piece of literature like Romeo and Juliet and Great Expectations. He also knows that in the process of receiving his

help, they often "sit back and wait for the answers." Thus the lower track students require more intervention on Jack's part but are less likely to work unless they find the material personally interesting. Jack believes there ought to be a way both to help them learn and to engage them in the process. Aware of this disjunction between wanting the students to understand the texts and wanting to "grab" them, Jack explains that education is, by its very nature, a "trade-off" between growth and independence.

Jack does not rely much on students' personal experiences or prior knowledge to help them comprehend the readings, as can be seen from the limited way he uses personal writing in relation to the readings. Students write personal essays to "stimulate their interest" in a piece of literature, but beyond this initial prompting, such efforts contribute little if anything to students' understanding since, in Jack's mind, comprehension does not depend on "connecting something personal from one's own life to what one sees or reads." He believes formal writing assignments are also of little value except as a post-mortem "test" of students' understanding. In general, then, most knowledge is developed communally via oral presentation; it is not developed individually on paper. Writing is used to test the students' understanding, not to develop it.

Accordingly, his locus of attention centers on the relationship between teacher and course materials. For Jack, the path to knowledge begins <u>in</u> the text, not in the knowledge students bring to the text. In Jack's system, prior knowledge contributes to interest in, not an understanding of the text.

Given these beliefs, Jack found the freewrites a useful way to stimulate student interest, not a way to develop the meaning of the text.

Because these freewrites did not lead students into the the text, it was not necessary or even relevant for him to integrate these writings into class discussions since these discussions were a time for explicating the text, not a time for "demagoguery." Furthermore, it was not necessary for Jack to make explicit the connection between the freewrites since he was not interested in having students build a coherent theory of personal experience. And finally, if time became a problem, these freewrites could be dropped from the curriculum altogether without risking the students' potential understanding of the text. Not surprisingly then, Jack neglects or resists those writing-to-learn tasks which, from his perspective, would short-circuit or preclude students' accomodating to the meaning in the text. In light of his concern, it is clear that my locus of attention not only differed from his, but in many respects, operated at cross-purposes with it.

Naomi

At one point, Naomi wanted her students to learn some facts about banking. We discussed how she might use writing to help students "think" about this information and how writing might be an opportunity for them to "internalize" it. We agreed that having them write an informal letter to a foreign student, a peer unfamiliar with the U.S. banking system, might encourage their learning. Although Naomi rarely has the students do out-of-class assignments, she said she thought it would be a "great" idea to have them work on this at home so they would have enough time to do it well.

On the day she assigned the letter, she spent 20 minutes giving directions and told the students it was due the first day they were back from a three day weekend. On the following Tuesday only two students

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

returned to class having done the assignment. She told the class that she was extremely disappointed by their irresponsible behavior, then informed them they would work in pairs to write the letter. She then came over to me and said she was disappointed, so we discussed the possiblilty of having them write the letter as though it were a freewrite, that is, write on their own with little outside prompting or structure. She agreed to do this and as students settled down to work, they complained that the assignment was difficult. During most of the hour, students worked on their own while Naomi moved around the room responding to individual questions. At the end of an hour I considered to be relatively productive, an hour where most students attended to the task at hand and wrote several pages on banking, Naomi apologized for the class, saying she was afraid it was too chaotic.

Naomi never again asked the students to do any out-of-class writing assignments, nor had them spend the class period writing on their own. Two months later, she recalled that she "liked" the letter assignment although she felt that it was not very effective, and added that the kids could have "gotten into it" and been more successful had the assignment been more structured.

From my perspective, Naomi's beliefs and behavior made little sense. Her belief that students should be willing to "do more for school" and her resistance to ask them to do outside work, her willingness to tolerate disruptive, off-task student behavior when she directs class activities and her discomfort when they complain but are on-task, her desire that students "think" and her emphasis on the form rather than the substance of their efforts—all seemed at best, inconsistent, and at worst, self-cancelling especially when viewed through the lens of my concern for "reasoned and disciplined thought" and the construction of new knowledge.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Inasmuch as Naomi's behaviors are conditioned by what appears to be her her locus of attention—her need to advise and to appease students—these behaviors make sense, however. It seems that Naomi minimized conflict in her classroom. From my perspective, she tolerated disruptive behavior and replaced activites students would not do with those that would allow them to be successful. In the end, it seemed to me that Naomi believed that success would stimulate students' interest and goodwill—attitudes she hoped would discourage future disruptions and resentment.

In our final interview, Naomi says

> I think the only thing about high school teachers is that they have to like these kids. If they didn't like them, I think it would be just deadly to teach them. Very difficult. . . .You really have to like them and care for them and feel like you're okay with them. If you didn't, forget it. I think they'd just eat you up.

These four ingredients—liking, caring for, communicating to, and feeling okay with students—seem to figure prominantly in Naomi's recipe for survival as a teacher. The primary ingredient is the teacher's attitude towards students. To this she adds the teacher's ability to behave and communicate so that students will recognize this attitude. A final ingredient—her relationship to the students—is measured by the students' reactions to her. According to this view, failure to include any one of these ingredients could be fatal for a teacher.

Although Naomi likes her students, she often finds their behavior disappointing. The mismatch between her expectations and their behavior pulls Naomi in two directions, a split often conveyed in class as Naomi finds herself forced to shift between statements of affirmation and assertions of discipline. On one occasion, for instance, she spends the first 12 minutes of class reprimanding students for talking during a guest speaker's presentation. She tells the class that they have no right to

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

behave this way, and that the best way to learn is by actively listening to others. Naomi uses this last point as a transition into the day's lesson—the importance of communicating in a marriage. At the end of the period she says "I love you" as the students leave the class.

In addition to such affirmations, Naomi demonstrates her care by structuring assignments so that students will be more likely to complete them. Unlike Jack, Naomi experiences little conflict between her need to interpret and structure her curriculum, and her desire for students' mastery of the subject matter. This difference might be explained by the fact that their notions of "success" are different inasmuch as Jack wants his students to internalize information while Naomi wants them to organize it so it can be retreived when needed. Put another way, Jack separates instructional means from educational ends, while Naomi does not.

Naomi communicates information and praise directly; she repeats information and issues criticisms indirectly. Camouflaging failure or criticism appears to be one of the strategies Naomi employs to "feel like she is okay with students." In order to feel okay, she is careful to diffuse student attitudes and behaviors that could be potentially negative and unpleasant. Camouflage is one way to avert a negative reaction. Another is simply to accommodate to students' interests, a strategy Naomi seems to employ when chosing course materials and evaluating student performance. For example, every year Naomi asks her students if they want to carry out a mock wedding ceremony. Students always say yes. She always "hates" that day because she feels the activity is "trite" and in some ways "sacreligious." Against her better judgment, she defers to her students' desire to "escape" and "pretend that they're grown up."

To avert or neutralize negative attitudes or behavior, Naomi appears

BEST COPY AVAILABLE
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

to sometimes choose not to interpret them as such. She employs this strategy when, for example, she sees the students cheating and says, "That's really one of the funny things about these kids is that they want to do assignments right and if they don't do them right then they do these little games, these little things. I think it's really funny." On other occasions, Naomi simply ignores student hostility or disinterest. Although she constantly asks students to stop talking and pay attention, the room is rarely quiet. She presses on despite the noise.

Naomi's other strategy—avoiding sources of potential conflict altogether—shapes many of her decisions about materials and activities. She says her class "is not the kind where you can sit down and give students a push." At one point she admits that the problem with asking the students to do an out-of-class assignment is simply "getting them to do it" at all. Later she admits she does not assign them work they will not do "because she want them to succeed and she know s they won't succeed if she ask s them to do those kinds of things." Naomi applies the same rationale when she finally decides not to give them some library work. She says she would like to have them do this kind of work but she is not sure it would be successful. A few moments later she adds that "rather than worrying about their behavior in the library" and "attempting to try and get them there in the first place," it is "simply easier to duplicate five pages and hand them out."

In the abstract, Naomi's four ingredients constitute a relatively unambiguous theory of teaching. However, conditioned by the fact that students lack adequate sophistication, motivation, and the ability to be organized, her position transforms into a finely-tuned rationale for precaution. Failure to "be okay with them" invites trouble, trouble which can be avoided if the teacher likes, cares for, and communicates to the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

students. Working against these attitudes and efforts are the students' own limitations which periodically force Naomi to exercise control and issue criticisms. Both of these make Naomi a potential adversary rather than the ally she seems to want to be. As their adversary, she risks losing their acceptance, a risk she seems to mitigate by camouflaging her criticism, reinterpreting students' disinterest, ignoring their disobedience, and avoiding sources of conflict wherever possible. The fact that so many of Naomi's behaviors make sense in light of such strategies suggests that she does indeed believe students are capable of "eating up" teachers. Rather than be consumed by her students, she avoids or diffuses conflict. Her survival would seem to depend on such efforts.

In light of these tactics, it is clear that many of the writing-to-learn assignments invited trouble in Naomi's class since many of these assignments lacked structure, "right" answers, and discouraged sustained prompts by the teacher. Because of this, students found them difficult to do; Naomi found them difficult to justify and control; both found them less than successful and thus unsatisfying. As with Jack, my locus of attention not only differed from, but in many respects, undermined Naomi's vital interests since student success not only marks her instructional achievement—(she says she wants students to leave the class with a complete notebook of materials if nothing else)—but also preserves her relationship to the students. In the end, it makes sense that Naomi would modify or altogether resist those curricular innovations that threatened these other instructional goals as well as her repetoire of reliable instructional methods.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Conditions for Instruction

While locus of attention specifies a point of critical balance in a meaning system, I have defined conditions for instruction as the the fundamental notions which drive the process that allows the system to achieve its goals. Although instruction can be—and often is—characterized in terms of the surface steps involved in teaching, this level of analysis provides little insight into sources of resistance since teachers' knowledge of such procedures does not guarantee their efforts will match the researcher's or curriculum planner's expectations. As Fulwiler has pointed out, an instructor incorporates specific practices into his or her instruction when he or she "perceives the conditions right or appropriate" (1984, p. 117). Rather than account for teachers' apparent resistance or failure in terms of these surface steps, then, it is necessary to look below surface methods to some of the underlying conditions which influence instructional practice. Because these conditions qualify the very process by which curricular goals are accomplished, they are a potential source of resistance. Ostensibly, these conditions must either be met or altogether changed if the curricular system is to be productive from the point of view of the practitioner.

What then are some of these conditions? Comparisons among the curricular systems presented in this study suggest three of these conditions and thus measures of fit or potential sources of resistance.

The Source of New Knowledge

One of these conditions—the source of new knowledge—is defined differently by all three participants in this writing project, a difference that affects the way each views writing as an instructional tool. Jack believes meaning and thus the source of new knowledge resides in the text. For Naomi, new knowledge develops from new experiences, experiences which

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

are generated and monitored by the teacher. The fact that both teachers believe the source of new knowledge lies somewhere outside the students helps to explain why each felt the need to provide much of the content and control the structure of the writing tasks. Jack controlled the information that was to go into the essay so that students would focus on new (text-based) knowledge rather than be sidetracked by old (personal) knowledge. Naomi wanted to control the writing assignments to insure that the students would know what to do and therefore experience success in the act of completing the work. Thus for Jack and Naomi, learning begins with the teacher's efforts to provide information and monitor activities.

Unlike either of these teachers, I consider the students as much a source of new knowledge as the materials and activities themselves. Believing that new knowledge is conditioned by old knowledge, I felt that the writing tasks should provide less structure for, and ask for more personal analysis from the students—that freedom to generate meaning rather than reproduce it would encourage students to use more complex thinking skills and, in the process, generate new knowledge. For me then, learning depends on—and thus should emphasize—the students', not the teacher's interpretation of the materials.

The Development of Knowledge

How one responds to this source—that is, how one characterizes the learning process—obviously has an important effect on the instructional strategies one uses to promote this process. Since my collaborative efforts with Jack and Naomi focused only on the development of writing tasks, this discussion will be limited to an evaluation of writing as it is conditioned by our perspectives on learning.

Jack's notion of learning is conditioned by several closely related beliefs: meaning resides in a text; individuals "grow" by grasping this

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

meaning; people grasp this meaning by accommodating to it. For Jack then, learning is the process by which one accomodates to new, rather than refines old information. Writing has little, if anything, to do with the process of accommodation. Instead, it measures the extent to which this accommodation has already taken place; it "tests" the students' grasp of the material. Writing is thus a reflection of what people already know—an opportunity to communicate personal or text-based information.

In Naomi's curricular system, learning takes place through a process of doing. As with Jack, her notion of learning is informed by a number of related beliefs about knowlege and materials. Naomi's belief that knowledge does not have to reside in one's head, coupled with her belief that students need to feel good about themselves, shapes her principal instructional strategy—structuring activities so that students experience success through a process of receiving, completing and organizing materials. Writing promotes learning inasmuch as it encourages students to pay attention and provides them with a method of recording information. For Naomi, this record is an important component of learning since she believes that information should be available, though not necessarily absorbed.

In my curricular system, learning is defined as an interactive process. Students comprehend information and thus develop knowledge on the basis of their assimilation of, and accomodation to that information. They assimilate information by filtering it through, and locating it within existing frames of knowledge; by accomodating to new information, they can, at least in some instances, restructure their existing knowledge. (For a more extensive definition of this kind of process, see Spiro, 1980, pp. 269 - 271.) That writing can be an effective way to promote learning

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

has been explored in some of the recent work done on the cognitive processes involved in—and developed by—the act of writing. Current hypotheses are driven by the notion that writing can be a powerful way to promote learning since in the process of writing, students can recall and sort through existing knowledge, can integrate old and new information, and can incorporate new information into larger frames, a process which allows them to organize information into larger chunks which makes their information about a topic less diffuse and more readily recalled. This process can also promote a radical restructuring of knowledge, a qualitative change in the ways the learner thinks about a topic. (For a review of the research on writing and learning, see Applebee's article, "Writing and Reasoning," 1984.)

Instructional Goals

A third condition that differs among all three participants is the way each specifies his or her instructional goals, goals which may include, but not be limited to the development of knowledge. Jack says he evaluates curricular goals realistically, acknowledging that what one would like to happen and what in fact does happen are often distinct outcomes. He teaches with both outcomes in mind. One set of goals, those that are "realistic" and drive most of Jack's instructional activities, is limited to having students accommodate to the meaning of a few literary texts. As reported above, writing does not figure into Jack's methods for achieving this set of goals and thus can be pre-empted if class time is limited. His other goals, those he would characterize as ideal, are ostensibly beyond his control.

Unable to instill a curious and adventuresome spirit in his students, Jack can only hope that these attitudes will develop and stimulate students to carry the meaning of literature back into themselves, a process that

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

leads to self-reflection and the development of personal wisdom. Although Jack's instructional strategies can not directly promote this ideal form of knowledge, they can indirectly promote it to the extent they do not diminish students' current capacity to be interested in literature. Because personal writing encourages self-expression and thus student interest, Jack feels the freewrites and the personal essays are a legitmate though not a particularly informative instructional strategy.

Naomi does not appear to have divided expectations because her goals seem to be specified in accordance with her students' capacity to succeed. Thus, to achieve her instructional goal—developing the resources one needs in order to survive—she instills in students a confident attitude and an awareness of relevant information sources. To the extent that the form is structured, that responses are limited, and that the process can be controlled by Naomi, writing is a trustworthy method for achieving her instructional goal.

At one level, my instructional goals were identical to the teachers' since my goal was to develop tasks in accordance with the teachers' selection of topics to be covered as well as the information to be learned by the students. At another level, our goals were quite different. Goals Jack consigned to fate were goals I felt could be realistically accomplished by having the students draw upon existing knowledge in their efforts to accomodate to new information. While Jack's goals differed in degree from mine, Naomi's differed in kind. Since students were not expected to internalize or reformulate or elaborate on information in her class, writing as a means to develop higher level thinking skills or promote the development of knowledge was at best, irrelevant, and at worst, an added complication for her as she attempted to accommodate to my

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

interests while maintaining a balance between her students' and her own.

To the extent that the writing-to-learn tasks met these three instructional conditions, they were more readily adopted by the teachers. Jack said he would continue to assign a number of writings prior to a formal essay. Although these writings will not develop the ideas that will be expressed in the formal paper, they will stimulate students' interests and give them an opportunity to practice writing. Naomi said she would continue to have the students keep daily journals, and explains her decision on the basis that students enjoy doing them, that the last ten minutes of class are always a "dead" time, and that she can use that time to gather materials for the next class. Thus, while both teachers adopted some of the writing tasks, they did so for reasons that differed from my own, reasons that suggest when "conditions were right or appropriate" for them.

CONCLUSION

The two measures of fit specified in this study—locus of attention which specifies a point of vulnerability in the system, and conditions of instruction which affect the systems' method of production—provide a useful way of understanding these teachers' apparent "resistance" to the new curriculum. More importantly, these measures point to an important but often overlooked consideration for curriculum implementation and evaluation projects.

More often than not, implementation procedures consist of little more than teachers receiving descriptions of subject matter, definitions of new or technical terminology, and/or outlines detailing the surface steps of an instructional process. As this case study analysis suggests, however, efforts to promote this kind of shared understanding do not guarentee that

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

teachers can or will adopt new curriculum. Of greater importance is the degree to which outsiders and insiders are able to develop a common orientation to, and shared assumptions about the process of schooling. Those in a position to develop, implement, and evaluate curricula need therefore to pay close attention to the circumstances through which innovations are introduced; they need to maximize the opportunities for exchange between outsiders and practitioners as both attempt to develop and evaluate what curricular innovations mean in various classrooms.

Thus, rather than look at teachers as passive transmitters of information, and new curriculum as a thing ready to elicit a certain type of adoption behavior, curriculum planners and evaluators need to begin to adopt practices they have long recommended to teachers—at the very least, they need to build instructional scaffolds that accomodate individual differences. In this case, it is important that training procedures and information take into account the in-place conceptual networks or meaning systems that filter teachers' evaluations of curriculum.

As a corollary to this, evaluators need to use procedures that will help them to begin to incorporate teachers' perspectives into their assessments of teachers' adoption behavior. Rather than ask why something happened as it did, we need to begin to ask why it was <u>appropriate</u> that it happened as it did. This added qualifier will help remind outsiders that, like any other intelligent agent, teachers deal with complexity and competing demands by simplifying them according to some kind of rational and adaptive strategy.

The analytic model used in this case study analysis was developed with this concern in mind. It represents a first attempt on the part of this researcher to crawl into the head of a teacher, a crude attempt to approximate an insider's account of a particular set of curriculum

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

approximate an insider's account of a particular set of curriculum innovations. While it would be presumptuous to assume that any analytic tool could provide a definitive or emic account of an individual's behavior, this model was developed with the idea that we need to start somewhere—need to start experimenting with crude technologies, and need to generate a body of empirical data—so that we might begin to understand the complex responses of teachers to curriculum innovations.

As I have defined it, this analytic model could be used in a number of settings for a variety of purposes. For example, it is quite conceivable that a different type of school setting, with different participants, and/or a different set implementation concerns would yield analytic categories altogether different from those used in this study. The four categories used in this study reflect the topics that seemed to predominate in my work with a particular set of teachers. In another study, a more narrowly defined set of analytic categories might emerge were one interested in measuring the fit between outsider and insider perspectives on any one of the four categories identified in this study. Conversly, a more broadly defined analytic construct than the one presented here might include categories related to environmental features. As nothing more than a matrix, then, this analytic construct can be scaled up or down to suit one's implementation focus or concerns.

How one uses this analytic construct can also vary widely from context to context. One might simply want to generate descriptive data that would add to our understanding of teachers' knowledge. In another context, this kind of analytic tool could be used to help teachers identify and evaluate the assumptions and ideas which influence their professional judgments and behavior. And finally, this kind of analytic construct with its various measures of fit could be used in implementation projects concerned with

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

introducing teachers to new curricula. In such a context, this type of analysis could be used to promote a dialogue between researchers and teachers about some fairly fundamantal ideas which influence curricular decisions and instructional practices.

However defined and used, this analytic model is offered in the hope that outsiders might begin to understand and then address the meaning systems operating in the schools. Conventional wisdom tells us that we need to take teachers' perspectives into account if we are going to be successful in implementing new curricula. To take this observation beyond a truism, we need to develop analytic tools that will give us some insight into what our innovations mean for teachers who have to use them. Until we find ways to understand practitioners and not just practice, our efforts to improve school curriculum are likely to be less effective than they need, or might otherwise be. Until then, we have only our truisms to encourage us.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Footnotes

1. One of the most extensive and informative discussions of this general issue can be found in Michael Fullan's book The Meaning of Educational Change. In his chapter entitled "The Causes and Processes of Adoption," Fullan develops the argument that "implementation is a problem of individuals' developing meaning in relation to specific policy or program directions" (1982, p. 62).

2. This notion, as well as its definition, is also taken from Fullan's (1982) work. One of the prime assumptions of this work is that the "neglect of the phenomenology of change—that is, how people actually experience changes as distinct from how it might have been intended—is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most social reforms" (p. 4).

3. These efforts were part of a larger study, Applebee and Langer's two year project, "Moving Toward Excellence: Writing and Learning in the High School Curriculum" (NIE-G-82-0027). A working assumption in the Applebee and Langer study was that "teachers can place more emphasis than they presently do upon reasoned and disciplined thought, and that in doing so,. . .will foster rather than interfere with students' learning of the lower-level information that now dominates the curriculum" (Unsolicited Proposal submitted to NIE, January 1982, p. 2). Drawing upon constructivist theories of language comprehension and recent work on the cognitive processes involved in, and developed by writing, these researchers argue that writing can promote these higher level intellectual processes across a variety of content areas. By incorporating writing tasks into these curricula, teachers can encourage students "to think through new concepts and new experiences" since "writers must sometimes reject, refine, and finally integrate available knowledge—both new and old—in the sorting out and thinking through that is part of the writing experience" (p. 15).

   Based on this view of writing then, the project examined "the kinds of learning fostered by various writing tasks" as well as "the way in which writing tasks function when implemented as part of the regular school curriculum" (proposal p. 6).

4. As I pondered these teachers' behaviors, one explanation came quickly to mind. Both of them might have felt less than completely free to offer their input during our talks and thus were unable to shape the initial assignments in ways that made them meaningful or useful. However, given the apparent ease with which we talked, the wide range of tasks we developed, the fact that these tasks were

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

experimental rather than mandatory, and the emphasis we placed on teachers sharing the problems or costs involved in using the writing tasks—this explanation seemed less than satisfactory.

The alternative explanation was equally unsettling. If these teachers assigned the writing-to-learn assignments believing, as I did, that we were in agreement as to their purpose and how they would be most effectively implemented in the classroom, then it appeared that our efforts to accomodate one another's concerns were not always enough to insure that these tasks would be implemented in accordance with the theoretical perspectives and instructional goals I brought to these planning sessions.

5. Although the term "practical knowledge" has become widely used as a way of generally identifying a teacher's repertoire professional knowledge about an array of topics, I've used quote marks to indicate that this term refers to the definition developed by Elbaz' in her work on teachers' knowledge. Her elaborate definition of this term not only contributed to my developing a number of interview questions, but also provided me with an initial set of analytic categories. For a more developed discussion of the contributions of her work to my own, see the Methodological Appendix.

6. I've used the term "curricular" since this particular label offered a way of unifying all four of my categories under a single construct. This construct was selected on the basis of Eisner's definition of curriculum as "a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one or more students" (1979, p. 39). My analytic categories—materials/activities, teacher, knowledge, and students—correspond to Eisner's notions of "planned events," "intention," "educational consequence," and "students" respectively.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

References

Applebee, A.N. Writing in the secondary School. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1981.

Applebee, A.N. Writing and reasoning. In Review of Educational Research, Vol. 54, 4, 1984, pp. 577 - 596.

Clark, C.M., and Peterson, P.L. Teachers thought processes. In M.C. Wittrock (ed.), Handbook of research on teaching, Third edition. New York: Macmillan, in press.

Clark, C.M. and Yinger, R.J. The hidden world of teaching: Implications of research on teacher planning. Research Series No. 77. The Institute for Research on Teaching. East Lansing, Michigan, 1980.

Corno, L. Classroom instruction and the matter of time. Classroom Management, 1979, Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education D.L. Luke (ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.

Doyle, W., and Ponder, G. The practicality ethic in teacher decision-making. Interchange, 1977, 8, 1-12.

Elbaz, F. The teacher's 'practical knowledge': Report of a case study. Curriculum Inquiry, 1981, 11, 43-71.

Fullan, Michael. The meaning of educational change. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1982.

Fulwiler, T. How well does writing across the curriculum work? College English, February 1984, 46, 113-126.

Olson, J.K. Teacher constructs and curriculum change. Journal of Curriculum Studies, January-March 1980, 12, 1-12.

————. Teacher influence in the classroom: A context for understanding curriculum translation. Instructional Science, September 1981, 10, 237-259.

Sarason, S.B. The culture of the school and the problem of change. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1971.

Schwab, J. Science, curriculum, and liberal education. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

Seiber, S.D. Images of the practitioner and strategies of educational change. Sociology of Education, 1972, 45, 362-385.

Spiro, R. Constructive processes in prose comprehension and recall. In R. Sprio, B. Bruce, and W. Brewer (Eds.) Theoretical issues in reading comprehension. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1980.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

First Round Data Analysis

I began my data analysis with the following three assumptions in mind:

First, I assumed that one way to identify a teacher's system of meaning is by the various "types" of knowledge that guide that system. In order to identify this knowledge in my subjects, I turned to Elbaz' 1981 work on teachers' "practical knowledge."

In her attempts to characterize a teacher's "cognitive style," Elbaz developed a set of analytic categories which reflect both "knowledge of practice as well as knowledge mediated by practice" (p. 46). I thought these categories would be helpful in identifying and characterizing elements of a meaning system since they represented experiential and analytical understanding, and included not only the substance of what teachers know but also the way they "hold" and apply knowledge. This way of characterizing knowledge promised to be of special use since I was trying trying to understand the active and adaptive strategies teachers employ in their efforts to implement curriculum. (See Figure 2 for a summary of Elbaz' analytic categories.)

Second, I assumed that an individual's system of meaning could not be adequately understood apart from the context in which that system functions. For the purpose of this analysis, this context was limited to classroom conversation and behaviors which manifested a variety of social contracts negotiated between teacher and students. Among other things, these contracts seemed to establish an instructional routine.

Finally, I assumed that any substantial modification of the teacher's instructional routine and materials (and neither of these teachers had used writing in the way he or she was now using it), would be disruptive and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

KNOWLEDGE CONTENT	KNOWLEDGE ORIENTATION	KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE
subject matter	situational—knowledge relevant to particular practical context *instructional *social *logistical	rule of practice—what to do or how to do it in particular situation
curriculum *definition of thinking and learning		
practical knowledge	social—social conditioning	practical principle—embody purpose in a deliberate and reflective way; rationale that emerges at end of deliberation of problem
personal knowledge		
interaction between teacher & *students *administration *social ethos *researchers	personal—personal need to integrate, order, render meaningful own experience	images—teacher's feelings, values, beliefs combined into brief metaphoric statements (this is most inclusive category)
theoretical	experiential (this implicit in #1 & #3) way world is structured as a result of knowledge ("cognitive style")	

Figure 2. Elbaz's (1981) Analytic Categories used to Conceptualize a Teacher's "Practical Knowledge."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

and thus a source of potential conflict between existing and new practical knowledge.

On the basis of these assumptions, I initially coded the interview and classroom data according to these three general domains of interest—the teacher's practical knowledge, the educational context, and the potential sources of conflict. (Immediately following this discussion is a copy of the Data Coding and Evaluation Sheet which provides an elaborated version of these three analytic categories.)

After this initial coding of the data, I developed a second analytical framework so that I might be able to synthesize my three original categories into a unified and manageable "system of meaning." I wanted this analytic construct to be broad enough to encompass the teacher's knowledge, the context, and the potential sources of conflict; for purposes of comparison, I wanted it to be applicable to both classrooms; and finally, for purposes of contrast, I wanted it to incorporate the crucial components of the writing-to-learn agenda I brought to the study. Taking all three of these considerations into account, I developed analytic framework which I labeled a "curricular system of meaning." A discussion of this framework is provided in the Data Analysis of the paper.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DATA CODING AND EVALUATION SHEET

A. THE TEACHER'S PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE*

I. KNOWLEDGE CONTENT

1. knowledge of the subject matter (k/c/sm)

(i) What does the teacher know (specifics) about the subject area being taught?
(ii) What are the sources of this knowledge? (does he/she still develop that knowledge base? rely on teacher's manuals? other teachers?)
(iii) How able is the teacher to articulate his/her knowledge?
(iv) How receptive is he/she to knew information? (clues to this receptivity?
(v) What are the changes for sharing/discussion/ elaboration with peers or other significant persons?

2. knowledge of curriculum (k/c/c)

I'm using Eisner's definition of curriculum—a series of planned activities that are meant to have an educational outcome for more than one student.

(i) What sources does the teacher draw from in his/her planning?
(ii) What types of activities does the teacher use in the classroom?
—Do these activities fall into a pattern, i.e., are some used more often and in association with certain learning goals/outcomes?
—Do they fall into a particular order?
(iii) How much of the curriculum activities are shaped by students? by their abilities? their interests?
(iv) What does the teacher consider his/her role to be in the instructional process?
(v) What is the teacher's definition of learning?
(vi) What is the teacher's definition of knowledge?
(vii) How does the teacher view writing (audience/function/ purpose in general)?

3. knowledge of the practical (k/c/pr)

(i) time constraints—in class, at home
(ii) amount of material that has to be covered
(iii) student's ability levels
(iv) classroom pacing
(v) students' attention span
(vi) students' needs
(vii) teacher's role in the classroom

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

4. personal knowledge (k/c/per)

(i) teacher's awareness of his/her own motives
limitations
personal limits
feelings towards students
in general and in particular

5. knowledge based on the interaction between teacher and environment (k/c/int.)

(i) students
(ii) other teachers
(iii) administrators
(iv) social ethos
(v) researchers in study

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A II. KNOWLEDGE ORIENTATION

1. situational (k/o/sit)—reflects intuition of early practical catetory; reflects assumption that teachers try to make work personally meaningful; knowledge relevant to particular, practical context.

   (i) instructional*
   (ii) social
   (iii) logistical

2. social (k/o/soc)—social conditioning by parents, students, schools' expectations, abilities, interests. (NOT passive but what's taken into account in teacher's active planning)

3. personal (k/o/per)—purpose and personal meaning shape perception, point of view, and interpretation re: setting and personal responsibility

   (i) point of view re: situation
   (ii) What part of the situation is attended to as data?

4. experiential (k/o/exp)—how teacher uses knowledge and organizes it in some meaningful way that allows him/her to function in it.

   (i) teachers level of attentiveness
   (ii) range of thinkgs he/she perceives
   (iii) time perspective

   'This category allows us to focus on relationships between a teacher's understanding of his/her work and his/her actual teaching style.

5. theoretical (k/o/th)

   (i) teacher's view of value of theory
   (ii) what, if any, theory teacher ascribes to

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A III. KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURE—represents degrees of generality of knowledge

1. rule of practice (k/s/rule)—what to do and how to do it in a particular situation; guides methods; may not be articulated.

2. practical principle (k/s/princ)—embodies purpose in a deliberate and reflective way; rationale that emerges at end of deliberation of problem.

3. images (k/s/imag)—teacher's fellings, values, beliefs, needs combine into brief metaphoric statements. This is most inclusive category; these images serve to guide teachers thinking and organization of knowledge.

EVALUATION/WRITE-UP: These then are reorganized into images that help to identify and describe the teacher's "cognitive style."

1. curricular imagery (k/cs/curr)
2. subject matter imagery (k/cs/subj. matt)
3. instructional imagery (k/cs/instr)
4. social imagery (k/cs/soc)
5. imagery of self (k/cs/self)

NOTE: these categories seem to parallel the knowledge content categories

*The three components of this practical knowledge—knowledge content, knowledge orientation, and knowledge structure—as well as the sub-categories under each, are taken from Elbaz.

B. CONTEXT

I. social contract (c/soc. contr)

II. classroom activity (c/cl. act)

a. events

(i) When does writing occur in the classroom?
(ii) What are the purposes served by writing in the class?
(iii) What are typical occasions for writing?
(iv) types of activities
(v) classroom talk
(vi) materials used
(vii) amount/type of peer interaction
(viii) What are the attributes of the writing assignment given?
(ix) What variations are there in the original assignments (before collaboration)

b. routines

(i) What are the patterns of activity in the classroom?
(ii) Do they follow a particular order?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

C. SOURCES OF CONFLICT

I. teacher/context interaction (Conflict/t & context)

'ambiguity —Olson, 1980

(i) when is the job done and how does teacher know?
(ii) who's in charge?
(iii) school/peer expectations
(iv) instructional support
(v) career support (N/A ?)
(vi) goals in education

II. teacher/researcher interaction (conflict/t & res)

'dilemma —Olson, 1981

(i) 2 perspectives on teacher's role in classroom
(ii) on teacher's method of instruction (e.g., instructional scaffolding)
(iii) on the purpose of instruction
(iv) task definition

EVALUATION/WRITE-UP: This can be evaluated in terms of high/low influence teaching (Olson 1981). Olson uses teacher's language of appraisal to characterize the two following styles:

a. high influence teaching
—teacher as prime mover (lecturing, seatwork, transmitting and guarenteeing information, creating attention and involvement)
—teacher as navigator (some student involvement but teacher in control
*editorial
*director
low-influence teachering got translated into these terms so that: -students are helped to understand material
-they're assured there's a point to learning the material
-students allowed to participate as as to engage their attention

b. low influence teaching (teachers read low influence teaching as if they were deficient versions of high influence teaching. p. 266)
teacher's lacked language re: -intellectual activity
-what they and students were to do in low-influence teaching (at a loss to describe events in lessons (269); seemed like an abdication p.279)
-teacher's thought goals of low influence teacher same as high influence teaching

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

III. teacher and student interaction

(i) How does the teacher know he/she is successful via students' performance?
(ii) What does the teacher interact with students about in class?
(iii) Who interacts habitually?
(iv) Who interacts only at crisis moments?
(v) Who interacts only at ------'s instigation?
(vi) Who habitually avoids interaction?
(vii) Who initiates via speaking
listening
reading
writing?
(viii) When does interaction take place?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE